



The Refuge

Catahoula National Wildlife Refuge, located in east central Louisiana, 12 miles east of Jena, was established on October 28, 1958. The 6,535 acre refuge borders nine miles of the northeast shore of Catahoula Lake, a 26,000 acre natural wetland renowned for its large concentrations of migratory waterfowl.

The primary objectives of the refuge are: to provide wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl; to provide optimum habitat and protection for endangered and threatened species; to preserve bottomland hardwoods; and to provide opportunities for environmental education, interpretation, and wildlife-oriented recreation.

All refuge hunting and fishing programs are open to the disabled. The fishing pier located on Cowpen Bayou is wheelchair accessible. Visitors with disabilities who need access assistance should contact the Refuge Manager. Hunters must possess a State Physically Challenged Hunter Permit.

General Regulations

Hunting and fishing regulations are designed to provide recreational opportunities through the wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting and sport fishing are permitted in accordance with the Federal regulations governing public use on wildlife refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Hunting and sport fishing will be in accordance with applicable State regulations and the refuge regulations listed below. Public use of the refuge is permitted only during the hours posted at the refuge headquarters entrance. The French Fork road is open on a 24 hour basis for access to Catahoula Lake only.

Permits

In addition to a valid state hunting license, a signed refuge permit is required to be carried on the hunter's person during all refuge hunts.

Youth under 16 years of age must possess a Hunter Safety Certification Card or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course.

Bowhunters must possess proof of completion of a Bowhunters Education Program.

All hunters must report hours hunted and game taken for each visit, at a refuge check station, before leaving the refuge.

Firearms/Bows



Firearms are permitted only during refuge gun hunting seasons. Firearms carried in any vehicle or boat must be unloaded and encased or dismantled.

During the state waterfowl season hunters may transport unloaded and encased or dismantled shotguns, and any legally taken game, across the refuge when travelling to and from the French Fork boat ramps or to Catahoula Lake via refuge-designated hunter crossing.

Bows are permitted only during the refuge archery hunting season. The use or possession of any drug on an arrow is prohibited.

Only shotgun shells with non-toxic shot may be used and possessed on the refuge during the small game hunt.

Methods of taking game

Hunting on the refuge is restricted to still hunting only.

The use of climbing spikes; attaching stands to trees with nails, screws, or bolts; or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven is prohibited. All stands left unattended on the refuge must be clearly identified with the owners full name and address. All stands must be removed prior to the end of the archery season.

Vehicles



Motor vehicles are restricted to graveled refuge roads as indicated on the refuge map. All off-road vehicles (4 wheelers, tractors, dirt bikes, etc.) are prohibited on the refuge. Except: ATVs permitted on the Muddy Bayou road between Bull Bayou bridge and the designated parking area. Speed limit is 25 mph on all roads. Refuge roads may be temporarily closed to vehicles by posted signs or special regulations due to flooding.

The use of seat belts is required by all vehicle operators and front seat passengers.

Boats

The use of boats is prohibited on all refuge waters except Cowpen Bayou and Highway 28 borrow pits from November 1 through February 28 (29).

Only those species listed below may be legally taken. State bag limits apply.

Small Game - Squirrel, Rabbit, Raccoon (shotgun, .22 rifle)

From opening day of State season through October 31.

Rabbit hunting with dogs permitted in Willow Lake Unit only, from close of waterfowl season through February 28.

Deer (Archery)

State season (squirrel, rabbit, raccoon are incidental game and may be taken per state regulations). Archery hunting closed during high water conditions (elevation of 40.0 ft. or above on Catahoula Lake satellite or Archie gauge).

Deer (Firearm)



Hogs

Unmarked hogs may be taken during all hunts.



Fishing

Only pole/line or rod/reel fishing for finfish is permitted. No snagging.

Cowpen Bayou and the Highway 28 borrow pits are open to fishing year-round.

Duck Lake and all other refuge waters are open to fishing and boating from March 1-October 31.

Only nonmotorized boats or boats with motors of 10-horsepower or less are permitted on refuge waters. Boats with motors over 10-horsepower are prohibited, whether or not the motors are used for power.

Launching of boats with trailers is permitted only at designated boat ramps. All boat trailers must be properly licensed. Small boats that are hand carried to the water may be launched at nonboat ramp sites. Dragging boats or driving vehicles onto road shoulders to launch boats is prohibited.

Boats may not be left on the refuge overnight.

Prohibited Activities

Open alcoholic containers in vehicles.

The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.

Baiting or hunting over bait.

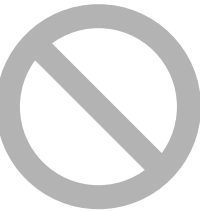
Taking, collecting or disturbing any plant (including nuts/berries) or wildlife, except as specified in regulations.

Target shooting or plinking.

Hunting within 50 feet of any refuge gravel road.

Hunting/Retrieval in "No Hunting Zones."

Casting a light to locate wildlife.



Parking or hunting within 150 feet of any oil well site, production facility, or equipment.

Parking/driving off of road shoulders.

Parking on refuge for access to adjoining non-refuge property.

Marking areas with tape, paint, paper, etc.

Use of horses or mules.

Camping/overnight parking.

Fires.

Cutting firewood or trimming vegetation.

Searching for or removing any object of antiquity including arrowheads and pottery shards.

Littering.

Unleashed pets.

Signs and Boundaries

Signs are useful tools in regulating the use of a public area. The wording of the sign applies to the area behind the sign. Fencelines are used for livestock control and do not indicate refuge boundaries unless posted with a refuge boundary sign.

Please respect the following signs:

Refuge Boundary

Entry permitted in accordance with refuge regulations.

Closed Area

All entry prohibited.

No Hunting Zone

Hunting, weapons, or game retrieval prohibited.

No Vehicles

All vehicle traffic prohibited.

